Programme and Project Management

Background and market requirement

In the highly competitive industries of telecommunications and information technology the window of opportunity for new businesses or new services can often be very small. In exploiting an opportunity it is the companies who can most quickly and most effectively marshal their resources who will make the biggest profits.

> "Nowadays, most organisations are experiencing unprecedented levels of change. Change has become a way of life for organisations that need to remain effective and competitive in order to thrive. It is essential to manage the inherent risk associated with change and innovation."
>
> Bob Assirati
> Chief Executive, CCTA

Programme and project management play a key role in helping companies achieve complex tasks on time and within budget. Programme Management is a process of marshalling the full diversity of company resources to achieve a strategic company objective. Project management is a process of managing a set of related resources to achieve a specific objective - generally part of an overall business objective. Typically, programme management involves the planning and co-ordination of a number of individual projects and activities across a company. It can embrace a wide range of functions: infrastructure build, organisation design, process development, staff recruitment and training, systems development, services development and launch, financial planning, contract or licence negotiation and external communication.

Although many companies will have some basic project management expertise in house, the combination of good project management skills, technological understanding and broad business experience needed to establish and drive major corporate programmes is generally less readily available.

How Intercai can help

Intercai Mondiale has extensive experience in running major programmes and projects for existing players and new entrants in the telecommunications market, and for assisting companies develop their own programme and project management capabilities.

We have skilled and highly experienced senior staff who have spent many years in the industry. We also have project managers who have undertaken many different types of projects - including building ATM and WDM

Intercai Mondiale assistance:

➢ Plan and run major programmes
➢ Plan and run individual projects
➢ Optimise current programme / project management
➢ Set up central 'project office'
➢ Recruit and train staff
➢ Provide expert support

networks, setting up Operations and Customer Service centres, negotiating licences and interconnect agreements and managing system implementations.

Intercai's approach

Our approach to Programme and project Management is particularly relevant where a high degree of integration with day to day operations may be required.

We believe that every project should be clearly directed to the achievement of a business deliverable, and managed accordingly. Too often we find major projects which have delivered new systems or networks but which take many more months to deliver planned benefits to the bottom line because related activities were not geared up to exploit them. As far as is possible, we ensure that each programme, and every project within it, has clearly defined objectives and scope related to a key business benefit. Similarly, we relate all progress reporting and change management to their impact on the overall programme deliverable. One of the key benefits from this approach is that we can make business impact fully visible. This greatly assists senior management in deciding priorities, making resource commitments and managing risk.

Many of our programme management assignments need to be delivered in close co-operation with active business functions, and in some way or other involve staff who have day to day line responsibility. In these

assignments our approach is to treat 'project management' as a generic management skill - not as a specialist skill. An effective project uses the skills and commitment of these individuals, supporting them as necessary with appropriate expertise. It is generally an advantage to take this approach also when companies are at the pre-operational phase of their development, so that future line management can be involved in the projects - particularly in the test and acceptance phases - without needing a full range of professional project management skills.

Although our strength in programme and project management comes mainly from the hands-on experience of our people, we also use our own methodology and set of tools. We place

> **Methodology and Tools:**
> Key processes:
> ➢ Planning
> ➢ Reporting
> ➢ Control
> Key plan elements:
> ➢ Business Objective
> ➢ Resources
> ➢ Deliverables
> ➢ Milestones
> ➢ Dependencies
> ➢ Risks
> ➢ Gantt Chart

a strong emphasis on planning and reporting, but we also aim to keep the 'overhead' of project management as low as possible. Our preferred methodology is simple, but fully consistent with more complex methodologies such as PRINCE®.

We are very pragmatic in our use of methodology and tools, preferring always to tailor or develop these to suit client circumstances. These can include:
➢ the degree of development required (systems development projects in particular call for close control);
➢ the general level of competence and experience within the organisation,
➢ company and country culture (formal methodologies work better in some countries than others!)
➢ the level of financial risk in the project.

Examples of recent assignments

An **international network operator** seeking to create a European high bandwidth network had established a plan and over 40 individual projects - but was concerned at the complete

lack of progress. Intercai Mondiale rationalised the projects into an overall, two-stage programme focussed on service delivery, set up a central Project Office, recruited key staff, assisted the project managers in re-planning their projects and ran communications and training seminars for all involved staff. After a formal re-launch, and with limited on-going support from Intercai, the company completed the first stage of its network build and launched services on schedule.

A **cable communications operator** in Continental Europe wished to upgrade its cable TV network to support two-way services, including high speed Internet. Progress was very poor, because of poor organisation, poor skills and an inherited monopolistic culture in its workforce. Intercai recommended that the client set up a programme of formal training in basic project management techniques for all line managers involved in the network construction and service roll-out, and to provide expert support to them through the creation of a central competence centre. The recommendations were adopted. Intercai assisted with the recruitment and training of the Competence Centre team, assisted the new team in setting up the required project planning and management processes and ran training programmes for all involved line managers. Intercai also undertook a full review of all current project plans and provided expert assistance to reconstruct the plans into an overall programme. With Intercai's help the client had rapidly acquired a central competence and a more confident and motivated workforce. Not only was the cable TV upgrade project completed effectively but it engendered a positive cultural change in the organisation - with benefit to other projects and operations as a whole.

A **new-entrant UK Telco** required assistance to implement key IS systems prior to service launch. Intercai had already been involved in the specification and selection of an Inter-Administration Billing system and was invited to manage the installation project. Intercai's role included supplier contract negotiation, hardware and software integration, system and operational testing. Intercai also played a lead role in ensuring the integration of this project with others for retail billing systems, mediation systems and the public telephony switches. All systems were brought into service on plan and in time to support the Telco's successful service launch.